

Editorial

The special issue of *Styles of Communication* is a volume inspired by the International Communication Styles Conference series held in Krosno, Poland, which turned out to be very successful, as it has drawn attention to the quickly developing discipline. The top scholars dealing with the intercultural communication and broadly understood communication styles take part in the meetings. The special plenary speakers of the first conference (in 2013) was Geert Hofstede and his co-author Michael Minkov. Very fruitful discussions resulted in the monograph written by multiple authors and entitled *Culture's Software: Communication Styles* (edited by Dorota Brzozowska and Władysław Chłopicki (2015). The guest of the second Communication Styles conference held in 2015 was Charles Forceville. The present special issue contains selected papers collected among the participants of the conference.

This issue consists of eight articles and contains theoretical approaches to communication style in general, metaphor in advertising and persuasion in public discourse, which are nonetheless illustrated by numerous examples (Chłopicki, Forceville, Świątek), as well as more data oriented approaches, including genre studies (Kurpiel, Shilikhina) and case studies (Brzozowska, Tsakona). The final paper is a questionnaire-based analysis of cultural attitudes (Rygiel). Perhaps a distinctive feature of the issue is the emphasis on the role of humour in defining a national, ethnic or regional communication style (Shilikhina, Brzozowska and Tsakona focus on that, while Chłopicki includes humour into his definition). Another distinctive feature of the issue is its highly intercultural nature, examples coming from British, American, Australian, Polish, Dutch, German, Italian, Spanish, Greek and Cretan cultures.

The issue opens with the overview article by Władysław Chłopicki, who attempts to define the communication style as a cluster of discursive elements, both formal or technical and referring to pragmatic usage and cultural values. Following the discussion of relevant intercultural studies, the paper moves on to analyse two corpora of Polish face-to-face conversations and draws some probable conclusions about the nature of Polish communication style. The contribution of Charles Forceville focuses on the interpretation of visual and multimodal metaphors in advertising and analyses the potential pitfalls when approaching them from the perspective of a different culture, thus assuming the existence of a visual interpretation code in a culture, which could also be identified in an educational context. Jerzy Świątek presents the application of the Relational Model Theory to explaining persuasive strategies on an example of an Australian public discourse

and contrasts it with politeness theory in the same context. Ryszard Kurpiel, on the other hand, explores the new genre of American, Italian and Polish vlogs of a special kind labelled challenge vlogs, trying to describe their stylistics across the three cultures and languages and finding surprising similarities.

The article by Ksenia Shilikhina starts the group of three humour-focused contributions. She attempts to present the profession-specific humour, which is typical of Russian culture, within the context of intellectual and professor-student humour, common also in other cultural contexts. Profession-specific humour mirrors social tension caused by the attempts to introduce quantitative measures of academic excellence and to reform science in Russia and thus communicates the background not necessarily familiar to other cultures. Dorota Brzozowska, in turn, follows the extraordinary story of a school prank turned viral due to political correctness or sensationalism of Polish media. The development of the attitudes to the plight of the central figure of the gift goat on the part of various participants in the public discourse, students, teachers, headteachers, animal right groups, social media and mainstream media, is traced against the background of Polish cultural communication style. Villy Tsakona similarly follows the online interactions in the social media evoked by a news story related to a stranded and captured crocodile who is either to be allowed to live at large in Crete or to continue to live in captivity. In the course of online interactions the resistant identities of Cretans are revealed and constructed either directly or indirectly, which clearly has a bearing on local cultural values. Similarly, the final paper by Dorota Rygiel explores the identity issues by investigating the attitudes of Spanish and Polish students to strangers, as conceived by George Simmel. The comparison of the attitudes of two groups of students of Krosno State College and Valladolid University towards people who originally come from different countries reveals similarities as well as striking differences, which can be brought down to cultural values.

We encourage readers to browse through the issue, develop interest in communication styles and maybe attend the next International Communication Styles conference planned to take place in October 2017.

Guest editors
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